

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9945

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CODEL, BEXP, BU

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SOFIA/PLOVDIV

REF: A) STATE 172344; B) SOFIA 1409

1. WE WELCOME PROPOSED CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION VISIT AND REVISED TIMING PERMITTING CODEL TO BE PRESENT AT AMERICA DAY AT PLOVDIV FAIR, WHICH WILL ENHANCE OUR EFFORTS THERE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME LOGISTICAL AND POLITICAL QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD BE SETTLED BEFORE THIS VISIT IS DEFINITELY SCHEDULED.

2. LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS:

A. TRANSPORTATION. IF US JET CARRYING DELEGATION IS OTHER THAN C-130 IT WILL BE UNABLE TO LAND AT THE PLOVDIV CIVILIAN AIRPORT WHICH IS A DIRT STRIP. IF JET IS OTHER THAN C-130 (FOR INSTANCE, A 707) WE SUGGEST THE EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED TO RENT A BALKAN AIR AN-24 TO FLY DELEGATION FROM SOFIA TO PLOVDIV AND BACK TO SOFIA ON SEPTEMBER 5; OR THAT AN US AIR FORCE C-130 BE SENT TO SOFIA TO TRANSPORT THE DELEGATION ON THAT DAY. ONLY OTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE THREE-HOQ BUS RIDE IN EACH DIRECTION, THE LATTER RIDE IN THE EVENING WITH LATE ARRIVAL IN SOFIA. DELEGATION SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT ALL TRANSPORTATION WITHIN BOTH SOFIA AND PLOVDIV WILL HAVE TO BE BY BUS.

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B. ACCOMMODATIONS. ON ASSUMPTION THAT 23 DOUBLE

ROOMS MAY BE REQUIRED (INCLUDING CREWS OF CODEL PLANE AND C-130) WE HAVE CHECKED AVAILABILITY OF HOTEL SPACE. ROOMS WOULD BE AVAILABLE AT PARK MOSKVA HOTEL BUT WE WERE CAUTIONED THAT FIRM WRITTEN RESERVATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE SOONEST SINCE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE TIGHT EVEN IN SOFIA DURING THE PERIOD OF FAIR AND ON EVE OF SEPT 9 NATIONAL HOLIDAY.

3. POLITICAL PROBLEM (PARA 4, REF A): EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP BULGARIAN EXPENSES TO MINIMUM, BUT IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD DELEGATION WILL NECESSARILY HAVE TO COME TO BULGARIA UNDER UMBRELLA OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IF RECIPROCITY PROBLEM IN WASHINGTON IS SUCH THAT CONGRESS CANNOT EXTEND INVITATION TO BULGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN BONEV AND OTHERS, IT WILL AT LEAST BE NECESSARY THAT CU MAKE AVAILABLE FOUR IVP GRANTS FOR BULGARIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS. ACCORDINGLY, WHEN AMBASSADOR INFORMS BONEV OF DESIRE OF CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO VISIT BULGARIA, HE SHOULD BE IN POSITION AT THAT TIME TO INVITE BONEV AND THREE OF HIS COLLEAGUES TO MAKE OFFICIAL VISIT TO US WHICH WOULD INCLUDE CALLS ON CAPITOL HILL. (SENATOR SPARKMAN LAST YEAR INVITED BONEV TO VISIT HIM IF HE SHOULD COME TO AMERICA; THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE WHEN BONEV WAS LAST THERE, BUT SOME MINIMUM OF CONGRESSIONAL HOSPITALITY COULD PRESUMABLY BE WORKED OUT IN CONNECTION WITH IVP VISITS.) DATES COULD BE WORKED OUT LATER. WITHOUT SUCH INVITATION IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THIS EMBASSY TO APPROACH THE BULGARIANS ON STILL ANOTHER CONGRESSIONAL VISIT. PLEASE ADVISE SOONEST ON GRANTS.
HERZ

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